TREASURY DEPARTMENT

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Nellie Tayloe Ross, Director of the Mint, announced today that she will convene the Annual Assay Commission at the United States Mint at Philadelphia on Wednesday morning, February 13, 1952, for the traditional "trial of the coins." Conducting the trial will be 12 members of the commission just appointed by President Truman.

The Assay Commission, Mrs. Ross pointed out, is one of the oldest and most dignified institutions of the Government, having been provided for, at the suggestion of Alexander Hamilton, in the same statute that established the Mint on April 2, 1792. A commission has assembled each year since that time. Its function is to make tests of new coins, taken at random from the three coinage mints during the preceding year, to determine whether they conform in weight and fineness to legal requirements.

Named by the President as members of the 1952 commission are: Mrs. Julia Crews, 19 Montrose Road, Scarsdale, New York; Mrs. Henry Ridgely, The Green, Dover, Delaware; Mrs. Florence K. Murray, 10 Kay Street, Newport, Rhode Island; Mr. Jean Model, Lake Avenue, Greenwich, Connecticut; Mr. John Franklin, Radio Station KYW, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Mr. Julius H. Requard, 7610 German Hill Road, Baltimore 22, Maryland; Mr. Stanley Sagner, 3417 Dennlyn Road, Baltimore 7, Maryland; Mrs. Alice D. Vincentis, 706 Edgemore Road, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Mr. Clifford Spoerl, 1st National Bank of Jersey City, New Jersey; Mr. Robert L. Huffines, Jr., 350 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York; Mr. Hans M. F. Schulman, 545 Fifth Avenue, New York 17, New York; Dr. Wallace R. Brode, National Bureau of Standards, Washington, D. C. Additional statutory members are Judge William H. Kirkpatrick of the United States District Court for Eastern Pennsylvania, Philadelphia; Preston Delano, Comptroller of the Currency, Washington; Joseph Buford, Assayer of the United States Assay Office, New York City.

It will take the commission two days to complete its work. The members will examine and test the coins which have been placed, through the year, in a "pyx box" -- one silver coin from every delivery of 10,000 made at all the mints. The "pyx" or coin chest is so styled because a receptacle for sample British coins was once kept in the Chapel of the Pyx in Westminister Abbey, London.

Under the 1792 law setting up the commission as an annual body it was provided that any mint officer or employee found to have debased coins with fraudulent intent should be put to death. The penalty now is lighter.

The 1951 silver coin production of the Mints totaled 320 million pieces with a total value of $61,434,219.70.

(Reporters and photographers will be admitted to the Mint at Philadelphia, 16th and Spring Garden Streets, in advance of the opening meeting of the Commission on February 13.)

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